

Response

The claims were amended in accordance with the amendments above. The amendments are being made to clarify the invention and to focus the claims on those aspects of the invention which are a commercial priority to the assignee. All of the amendments are fully supported by the specification, claims, and figures as originally filed. No new matter is believed or intended to be involved.

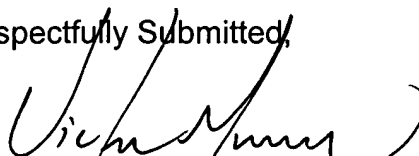
Applicant appreciates the courtesies extended during the telephonic interview with the Examiner on 03/07/2005. The claims have been amended as discussed in the interview. Applicant appreciates the Examiner's indication during the interview that the claims as amended would be patentable over the art of record. However, the Applicant acknowledges that the Examiner reserved the right to supplement his search.

In the Office Action dated 02/22/2005, claims 20-40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Ebata et al. (U.S. 6,693,533). As discussed in the interview, Ebata et al. fails to teach sending images or portions of image packages from the same camera through more than one path; whereas the each independent claim of the present amended claims recites sending images or portions of image packages from the same camera through more than one path. To the extent that Ebata et al. teaches the use of more than one path for sending images, such teaching is limited to the use of several cameras, each camera having its own single path (Col. 9, ll. 41-63) – as opposed to a single camera having several paths to a recipient. For at least this reason, the present claims are patentable over Ebata et al. Applicant further notes that the dependent claims include additional limitations not taught or suggested in the art of record, thus forming independent basis for novelty and non-obviousness.

To the extent that the amendments constitute a narrowing of the claims, such narrowing of the claims should not be construed as an admission as to the merits of the prior rejections. Indeed, Applicant traverses the rejections and preserves all rights and arguments.

Based on the foregoing, all pending claims are in a condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and an early notice of allowance.

Respectfully Submitted,



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